

THE SCOPE OF MUSICOLOGY IN LATINAMERICAN COUNTRIES

I. What can Latin America (LA) offer to musicology and ethnomusicology? LA countries have an enormous cultural potentiality to be added to mankind's general knowledge. The field of research in LA is wide and deep. Its social history begins to be written¹ and scientific research of our cultural past began not long ago. The musicologist has five centuries to look back for and contribute thus to social history; the ethnomusicologist, on the other hand, can begin at any geographical point of this Continent, being sure to find immediate and rewarding results. The History of Latinamerican Music and the History of Latinamerican Folk and Aboriginal Music have not yet been written. There are many well known pioneers whose works are milestones towards this needed general information, but present and future generations of well prepared scholars have much more to accomplish.

II. Potentiality of LA researchers. Now we count with local well trained researchers whose work and publications are being considered at international level, but we need a greater number of LA scholars because of their similar idiosyncrasy, idiomatic unity, and understanding of our continental problems. Our main task is concerned with the primary sources present the Continent we live in: to become experts on the music of Afganistan or to work on Beethoven's or Dufay's „Urtext“ is worthless to our musicologists, but it will be rewarding to study and transcribe the music of a Franco, a Juan de Araujo, or a Orejón y Aparicio, whose manuscripts are still within our colonial Cathedrals. What LA needs is a well integrated group of capable scholars working on its past and present music, and the scientific formation of new generations who will be able to build a proper image of LA culture.

III. What can european musicology offer? Ten years ago we heard that "musicians the world over still consider Europe as the only legitimate area for musicological endeavour"². It is also true that "even those of us who are professional students cannot escape the guilt of knowing too little about the musics of every other continent except Europe"³. I believe that nothing has changed substantially since then. If we wrongly assume that europeans have no interest in LA musicological research this does not mean that such interest can not exist. European musicologists can positively contribute to their LA colleagues through their participation on LA musical research or through close contact with those working in the field. Musical contacts between LA and Europe since World War II have experimented real disconnection. Bibliography, specialized periodical publications, collected works, recordings, etc., are virtually ignored both ways. Within LA this is due to two main facts: lack of information and contact with the european scene, and high material cost of this information.

IV. Problems of LA musicology. One of the main problems conspiring against the development of musicology in LA is the high cost of research and training of young scholars. The ever increasing inflation in our countries constitutes enemy number one of culture: State's, University's or Foundation's cultural budgets are always first to be cut down, and they are precisely the main supporters of musical research. A cultural investigator is not always considered within the same status as other scientific researchers or members of liberal professions. Lack of economical stimulus and professional encouragement, plus increasing brain drain, has established a paralyzing vicious circle. Musicology in LA is in need of a dignified status and an institutional organization with real and creative contacts at a continental level. It would be a great step forward if we use this occasion as a basis towards these accomplishments. Each

generation that goes by without starting serious work on this line will cause a poorer harvest for coming years.

V. Research samples offered by LA music. The musicologist basically concerned with the european trends of LA music will have to begin his researches around the 16th century, but the ethnomusicologist has an unlimited chronological field prior to Columbus days. Mexico is an extraordinary field for musicologists who wish to study 16th century music, Colombia will also offer rewarding possibilities, and Central America is practically unexplored. Baroque music of the 17th and 18th centuries fill the arks of LA archives of the Pacific coast especially. We have chosen for this occasion one particular and attractive aspect of LA music: dramatic music prior 19th century. Theater and music were the most popular entertainments in Spain and her colonies. Spanish opera school of the 17th century, represented by Juan Hidalgo's works, became a reality in Peru when Lima saw the first performance, in 1701, of the first opera composed in the New World, "La Púrpura de la Rosa", by Tomás de Torrejón y Valasco (1644-1728), probably Hidalgo's pupil in Madrid. When the House of Bourbons ascended the Spanish throne, in the first decade of the 18th century, it brought about an important change of taste, favoring Italian style against Spanish, and adopting, under Farinelli's influence, Neapolitan opera style for church, secular, and dramatic music. Ten years later only, in 1711, the second opera produced in the New World was conceived according to Italian patterns: "Partenope", by the mexican Manuel Zumaya, based on Stampiglia's libretto used also by G. F. Handel in 1730. The Italian composer Roque Ceruti (+1760) - who came to Peru with the first Spanish subordinate to the Bourbons, Marqués Castell dos Ríus, and who was appointed Chapelmaster at Lima Cathedral after Torrejón y Velasco - enthroned Italian style in peruvian music. His sucesor and pupil, José de Orejón y Aparicio (+1765), native of Huacho, Peru, is one of the most gifted LA composers of the 18th century. His "villancicos", of cantata form, are still lying at Lima's Archiepiscopal Archive. Contemporary to Orejón we have the augustinian friar Esteban Ponce de León (ca. 1692-175 ?), another LA born composer, Chapelmaster at Cuzco Cathedral in 1750, author of several dramatic works preserved within the Seminary of Saint Anthony Abbot in this city. His Opera-Serenata "Venid, venid Deydades" was written in 1749 honoring the new bishop of Paraguay, Fernando Pérez de Oblitas. It is a type of "auto sacramental" in which Arequipa - the bishop's birth place - and the city of Cuzco fight one another trying to establish which of the two have done more for the Prelate. The contest had to be resolved by celestial beings. My transcription of this Opera-Serenata had its premiere in Santiago, Chile, this year.

Footnotes

- 1 UNESCO's resolution 3.325 of 1966 will be completed by 1972, including visual arts, music and architecture.
- 2 R. Stevenson, "Music Research in South American Libraries", Inter-American-Music Bulletin, 18 (July, 1960), 4.
- 3 Ibid.